United Nations S/PV.4070

Security Council
Fifty-fourth Year

Provisional

4070th Meeting
Friday, 19 November 1999, 12.40 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Türk	(Slovenia)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Fonseca
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Burleigh

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1242 (1999) (S/1999/1162 and Corr.1)

Letter dated 17 November 1999 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait (S/1999/1177)

99-86509 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 12.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1242 (1999) (S/1999/1162 and Corr.1)

Letter dated 17 November 1999 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait (S/1999/1177)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1242 (1999), document S/1999/1162 and corrigendum 1, and the letter dated 17 November 1999 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait (S/1999/1177).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1999/1180, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/1999/1180) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is convinced that a decisive resolution of the humanitarian crisis will be impossible while the humanitarian sanctions continue. We have consistently advocated putting an end to the sanctions regime in the context of the renewal of disarmament monitoring in Iraq. We will keep working in this direction in the future.

Unfortunately, in spite of the efforts to implement a humanitarian resolution, the overall situation of the Iraqi population and the degradation of the social and economic infrastructure of the country has continued to worsen further. The problem of delivering urgently needed goods and equipment to the population is growing because the contracts are being blocked in the sanctions Committee.

In this connection, based on the need to take urgent steps in order to correct the situation that has developed, the Russian Federation proposed that we adopt a draft resolution to further extend the humanitarian operations of the United Nations, taking into account the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the conclusions of the humanitarian panel chaired by Celso Amorim on the necessity of enhancing the humanitarian operations of the United Nations.

We believe that it is extremely important that such measures as raising the oil ceiling, increasing the quota for deliveries to Iraq of spare parts for the oil industry, simplifying the procedure for considering contracts in the sanctions Committee and resolving the problem of air transport connections with Baghdad enter into effect now, within the framework of a new phase of the operation, thereby enhancing its effectiveness. Unfortunately, our argument that all items pertaining to the humanitarian blockade should be considered within the framework of a comprehensive resolution on Iraq was not taken into account by a number of delegations.

Given the position taken by a number of members of the Council, we do not object to the adoption of a short, technical draft resolution to extend the sixth phase of the United Nations humanitarian operations by two weeks on the understanding that the next phase of the effort to resolve the humanitarian problem is to be determined later. That will include taking into account continuing work on the entire Iraqi problem.

We would like to make it clear that our position on this draft resolution should not in any way be considered as having any linkage with our position on the comprehensive draft resolution that must be adopted by the Security Council when the two-week period has elapsed. In other words, such a technical solution should not at all determine the timetable for conclusion of work on an omnibus draft resolution, and we do not take upon

ourselves any obligations in this respect. In order to find a way out of the Iraqi deadlock, we must reach agreement on the essence of the serious problems that remain. Attempts to establish any kind of artificial timetable would not be appropriate.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): The Council is about to adopt a draft resolution extending the sixth phase of the humanitarian arrangements in Iraq, established by resolution 986 (1995), for a period of 15 days. We hope that the members of the Council will make good use of this period of time in order to make progress in the discussions aimed at preparing a comprehensive draft resolution to make it possible to re-establish international monitoring in Iraq and to restore cooperation between that country and the United Nations.

France will spare no effort to ensure that such a comprehensive draft resolution is adopted as soon as possible, and by consensus. Only its unanimous adoption by the members of the Council will offer any real prospect of an end to the crisis.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China will vote in favour of the draft resolution, because we have always believed that the implementation of the oil-for-food programme is conducive to improving the humanitarian situation in Iraq and to easing the unjustifiable sufferings of the Iraqi civilians living under sanctions. We have always believed, too, that pending the lifting of sanctions against Iraq, the elements of the programme should be further enhanced and improved in the light of the specific situation so as to make it more effective.

Meanwhile, I also wish to emphasize that the Security Council's technical extension of the oil-for-food programme and its consideration of the new omnibus draft resolution are two separate matters, and are not directly linked. We hope that the Security Council will adopt a new draft resolution on Iraq as soon as possible, on the basis of consensus.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom supports the draft resolution before the Council. The situation in Iraq does need attention. The humanitarian situation on the ground does need treatment. Of course, much of the work that can now be done is in Iraq's own hands; there is an enormous programme that could be moved forward with effect for those most closely affected by the economic situation if there was full cooperation with the United Nations programme. But that is not what we are talking about today. I believe that we all agree that real improvements in the humanitarian situation will not be possible until and unless there is a comprehensive approach, fashioned by the Council, to our overall relationship with Iraq that will include taking steps for the suspension or lifting of sanctions under conditions that relate to the Council's resolutions.

A reference has been made in this debate to the timing of the current negotiations. I entirely agree that there is no linkage with any other matter. The comprehensive draft resolution needs negotiations in their own time and for their own purpose. But there is a relationship with our intention to improve the situation on the ground, which will not be improving day by day until we take more comprehensive steps. There was no real reason not to have an extension of the oil-for-food programme from phase VI to phase VII, if there was no such linkage. But it has been sensible to agree to the extension of the current phase for a two-week period.

I would like to report again to the Council that five members of the Council are indeed involved in extremely detailed negotiations on a comprehensive text. We believe that there is solid commitment to an early outcome to those negotiations. More work needs to be done. I would sincerely hope that we could bring a draft text back to the Council within a very short period.

It is not actually a question of the extension of time; it is a question of coming to decisions — very difficult decisions, as we all acknowledge — to reach the kind of negotiated compromise that is going to be essential on this subject. Perhaps we have been a bit diverted by the question of time, when the real question is one of determination to reach a solution. I hope we will have the encouragement of the whole Council, and of the United Nations membership at large, in bringing the negotiations to a successful close.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): We too support the draft resolution before the Council today, because we wish to give the negotiations that are under way on a comprehensive omnibus draft resolution additional time to succeed. For over a year, the Council has failed in its responsibility to deal effectively with the Iraq problem, and a new comprehensive omnibus resolution would finally allow us to resume weapons inspections while providing effective humanitarian relief to the people of Iraq.

We do not think that these matters can be easily or usefully separated. A comprehensive draft resolution will

involve many difficult compromises, but we believe that the chances of its adoption would be considerably lessened if we looked at one or another element in isolation in the current circumstances. We therefore believe that we should give the negotiations every chance to succeed, and we would urge the five permanent members of the Council to resume those negotiations with a view to concluding them just as quickly as possible.

Mr. Burleigh (United States of America): I too wanted just to add a few words. The draft resolution in front of us, I think, is non-controversial, given its technical nature. It was requested by one Council colleague that the Council should consider at least taking this step of a brief extension of the current phase of the oil-for-food programme, and I think all are agreeable to doing that.

But this is just a brief interim step. The critical issue here, in my Government's view, is that it is time now for the Council as a whole to take up the Iraq issue comprehensively. We think that a strong majority of the Council is committed to a comprehensive approach, and I would like to call on all Council colleagues to agree to a maximal effort, along the lines of what Ambassador Dejammet said earlier, to reach closure on a comprehensive approach to the Iraq issue confronting the Council. I would hope that that could be done in a short period of time.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The purpose of the draft resolution before the Council is to effect an uninterrupted extension of arrangements under resolution 986 (1995): the oil-for-food programme. I should like to highlight the flexibility and common sense that prevail in the consideration of this matter, and our belief that any interruption in the programme would be unacceptable because of the humanitarian consequences it would entail.

Having said that, it is clear that over the next two weeks we shall all have to work in a spirit of compromise and flexibility to settle existing unresolved differences in the ongoing negotiations on a substantive draft resolution. We hope that we will very soon have before us the draft resolution which has been in negotiation since the beginning of this year on all aspects of the Iraq issue. We believe that no effort should be spared to reach consensus in the negotiations.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): The Amorim panel issued its report on 30 March, and soon after that my delegation, together with that of the United Kingdom, introduced a draft resolution on this matter. Since then, counter-proposals have been made.

We have been too intimately involved in the process for us to underestimate the difficulties, but we cannot conceal the fact that my delegation is far from happy with the way the Iraq file is being handled in the Security Council today. While the permanent five have been struggling with this issue for almost six months, we, the non-permanent members, have had no more than approximately one progress report per month, courtesy of the United Kingdom delegation. It is possible that this way of functioning, and this speed, are acceptable to the permanent five, but we, the elected members, simply cannot go on telling the other United Nations Members, which elected us, that we are content to sit and wait for white smoke to emerge from the "H-5" chambers. I use the expression "H-5" because in my delegation we have started to call the permanent five "the hereditary five", which makes a better contrast with the elected ten.

We have been happy to go along with the roll-over for two weeks, but for two weeks only, because we hope that this will be a way to keep the pressure on the permanent five to complete their work on an omnibus draft resolution on Iraq within that period.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): We support the draft resolution before us in the conviction that, if we are really concerned with and committed to the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people, we should aim at a more comprehensive and integrated approach to the whole question of Iraq. That is why my delegation believes also that this is a question of resolve, and that the time has now come to finalize the text of a comprehensive draft resolution on Iraq.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): Brazil would prefer to be here today adopting a draft resolution that would allow us to start phase VII of the oil-for-food programme. We attach the greatest importance to the maintenance and improvement of the programme. It will continue to be essential to the well-being of the Iraqi people so long as sanctions remain in place.

However, agreement with regard to the draft text originally presented has not been possible. We regret that. So, we support this technical draft resolution, which simply extends the current phase for two weeks. We hope that those two weeks can be used constructively by the Security Council members involved in the discussions on a comprehensive draft resolution. Our expectation is that

the comprehensive draft resolution can be adopted by consensus. The unity of the 15 Security Council members with regard to a text that redefines the relationship between the United Nations and Iraq will be a very important sign for the international community. It will demonstrate that the United Nations is ready and willing to address this question through dialogue, diplomacy and multilateralism.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation also supports the draft resolution on an extension of phase VI of the oil-for-food programme for a period of two weeks. It is our hope, indeed our expectation, that we will be able to make a breakthrough on the larger issue of Iraq following the intense and intensive consultations among some members of the Council. In this regard, while we support the draft resolution before us, we see no linkage, in terms of the time-frame, between this exercise and the decision on the omnibus draft resolution, which should be brought to the Council for full discussion by all member States of the Council for an eventual decision that ought to be taken on the basis of unanimity among all members of the Council. Only a consensus resolution would provide a basis for final resolution of the problem, and we encourage the permanent members to intensify their negotiations with a view to bringing the issue back to the Council.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am speaking a second time to make one clarification. Ambassador Greenstock described a situation that has arisen in the negotiations of the five countries, and he made an appraisal of the status of these negotiations. I simply would like to say that Ambassador Greenstock made the appraisal on his own behalf and not on behalf of the five countries he mentioned.

I would like to reiterate that there can be no artificial timetable or temporary limitations. If we were to talk about real compliance with the existing resolutions of the Security Council, in such a way that they would be complied with also by the members of the Security Council, then I think we would quickly be able to reach an agreement. But here, to a great extent, politics are involved, and we believe that it is wrong for an improvement in the humanitarian situation in Iraq to be held hostage to politics.

As for the Russian Federation, we are prepared to do our utmost to speed up an agreement on a genuinely, wholly acceptable text for a draft resolution. I would like to recall, for those who at this point are in a hurry, that in April of this year, Russia submitted a draft resolution proposing that the results of the work of the three panels headed by Ambassador Amorim be approved.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1999/1180.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Gabon, Gambia, Malaysia, Namibia, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Slovenia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1275 (1999).

Before concluding the meeting, I would like to make some brief remarks in my national capacity.

I believe that all those present at the formal meeting today have seen once again that the Security Council is intensely engaged in an effort to develop a new system for dealing with the issues of Iraq. The explanations of vote have been many and very pointed. My delegation, like other delegations, is concerned over the fact that the efforts to devise such a system have been going on for months without a definitive result so far. All members of the Security Council have participated in that effort. Some have, while explaining their votes, referred especially to efforts by Ambassador Celso Amorim of Brazil, who chaired the panels earlier this year. That contribution to the work of the Security Council has been of paramount importance and constitutes the platform upon which a proper decision of the Security Council can be developed. In the subsequent efforts, non-permanent members contributed a variety of ideas, which we continue to believe are useful in the process of the preparation of the draft resolution.

At this stage, the main part of the work is focused on the efforts and negotiations among permanent members of the Security Council. The reality of the Council and the reality of the subject are such that they require a period during which the permanent members give particular attention to and accept a particular burden in moving the process forward. But as the discussion today has shown, there is a growing interest and a growing need among members of the Council as a whole, and among the Members of the United Nations at large, to bring this process back into the Council, to finalize it here and to adopt decisions which are long overdue.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed in my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.